



Royal Academy of Music,

Principal :

JOHN B. McEWEN, Esq., M.A., F.R.A.M., F.R.C.M.

REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS

AT THE

ANNUAL

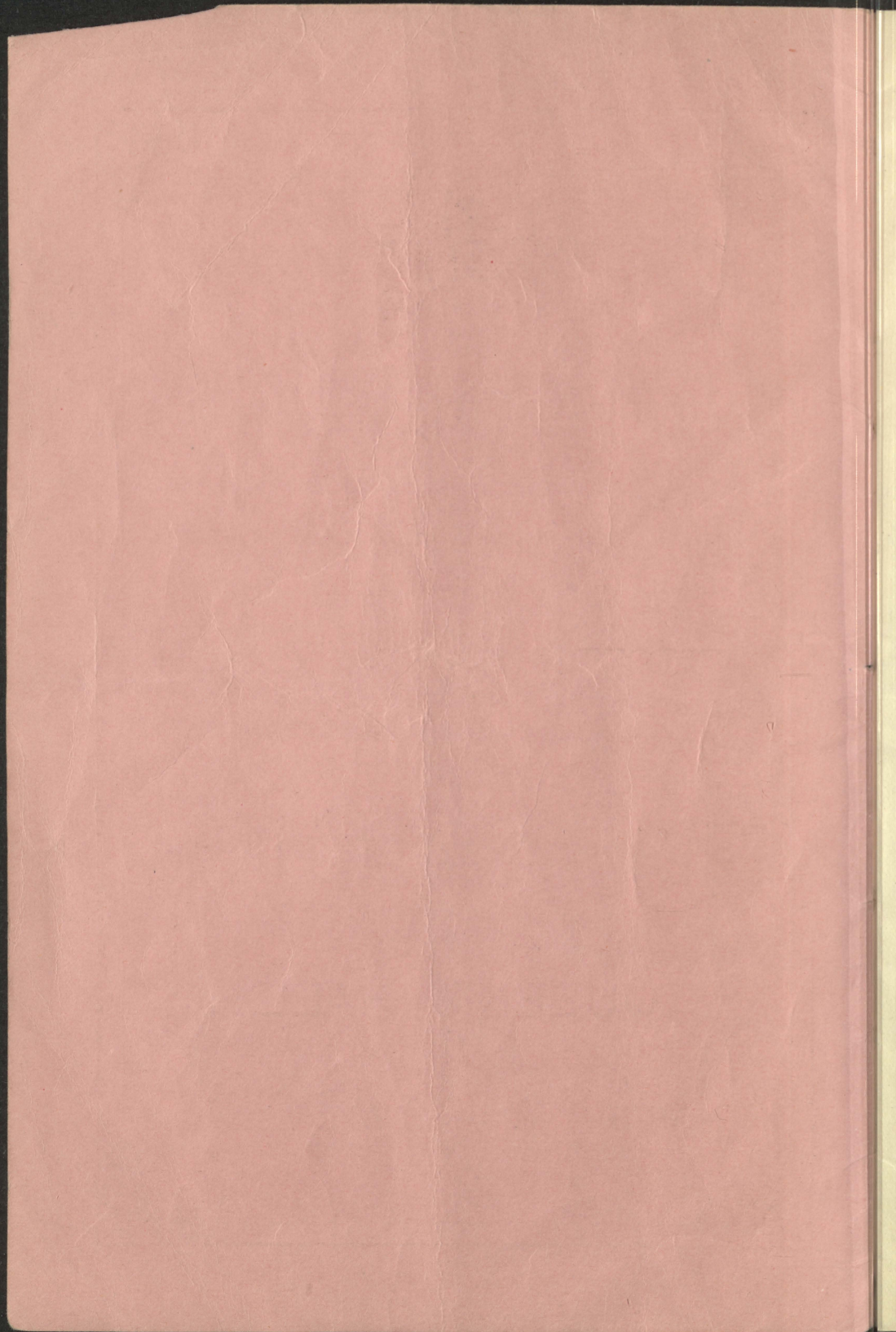
Distribution of Prizes

AT

QUEEN'S HALL,

ON

FRIDAY, 24th JULY, 1925.





The Royal Academy of Music.

DISTRIBUTION OF PRIZES

BY

THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT.



IS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT AND STRATHEARN, K.G., the President, attended the annual prize distribution of the Royal Academy of Music, held at Queen's Hall, Langham Place, on Friday, July 24, 1925, and distributed the awards in the presence of a large gathering of old and present Students and their friends.

His Royal Highness was received at the entrance to the Hall by the following Members of the Governing Bodies: Sir Gilbert Greenall, Bart., C.V.O., LL.D., Ernest Mathews, Esq., C.V.O., M.A., LL.D., the Right Hon. Lord Airedale, P.C., R. Entwisle Bury, Esq., Ludovic G. Foster, Esq., Major W. Loudon Greenlees, Colonel John Hopton, Sir Alexander C. Mackenzie, K.C.V.O., Mus.D., LL.D., D.C.L., F.R.A.M., F.R.C.M., Philip L. Agnew, Esq., M.A., Hugh Fitch, Esq., Thomas B. Knott, Esq., F.R.A.M.,

Stewart Macpherson, Esq., F.R.A.M., Ernest Read, Esq., F.R.A.M., John B. McEwen, Esq., M.A., F.R.A.M., F.R.C.M. (Principal), H. W. Richards, Esq., Mus.D., Hon. R.A.M. (Warden), and J. A. Creighton, Esq. (Secretary).

In the meantime two of the youngest students, Miss E. S. Hesketh and Miss E. S. Dyke, presented Mrs. J. B. McEwen and Mrs. Threlfall (widow of Mr. T. Threlfall, a former Chairman of Committee and a munificent benefactor of the Academy) with beautiful bouquets.

As the President entered the Hall the Choir, who were robed in white with scarlet sashes, under the conductorship of Mr. Ernest Read, F.R.A.M., led the singing of the National Anthem.

THE PRINCIPAL then said: Your Royal Highness, Ladies and Gentlemen—The order of procedure which we will follow this afternoon is the same as that which was followed last year, and has been adopted for the same reason. According to this we are able to start with what our young friends behind me will regard as the most important part of this afternoon's ceremony. An additional value will be conferred on the prizes, valuable as they are in themselves, by the fact that they will be received, Sir, from your hands. (Applause.) Before proceeding to that part of the ceremony, I should like to make an announcement. Unfortunately one of the members of our quartet who are to play this afternoon has been taken suddenly and seriously ill, and at the last moment Mr. Lionel Tertis, a fine artist of whom we are all proud, not only because he is a Britisher, but because he is a Professor in the Royal Academy of Music, has consented very kindly to fill the gap. (Applause.)

After the presentation of the prizes,

SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE, who on rising was received with loud and prolonged applause, proposed a vote of thanks to the President. He said: Your Royal Highness, Ladies and Gentlemen—It is on behalf of the Directors that I am accorded the privilege on this occasion of expressing the deep sense of gratefulness they feel at these repeated visits to the school, which mark the unceasing interest that you, Sir, so graciously take in its progress and well-being. Although our cordial appreciation of this continued encouragement must, in the circumstances, be compressed into a few and inadequate words, it is most sincere and genuine. No student here but keenly looks forward to take his or her part in joining in a loyal and heart-felt welcome to our President.

(Applause.) Mr. McEwen has touched lightly upon what I am going to say. It is no exaggeration to say that the successful ones—a goodly number, as no doubt you know by now, Sir—value these awards infinitely more, prize them much more highly, because they have been handed to them by yourself, Sir (Applause); to all a lasting, soundly helpful reminder to carry about with them in future days. No one is better able to realise that than just myself, for, in my student days, I missed all these stimulating and pleasurable events. I never had even a glimpse of a President; in fact I think I am right in saying that we had none in my time. On the other hand, I can state with absolute certainty that I never either saw, or got, a medal. But the long passage of time since then has wrought so many important changes, so many improvements and benefits to the large number of those who seek instruction in our art, which the old school may view with a very pardonable amount of pride. I think, however, that Your Royal Highness's presence among us is a fact on which the Academy may specially congratulate itself, because, if I may presume to say so, it seems to assure us that we have been fortunate enough to retain that confidence which you, Sir, have so amiably extended to us for so many years. That is the award you again give the Governing Bodies to-day, for where the advancement of the Academy is concerned we are all students, and we beg most cordially to thank you, Sir. (Applause.)

MR. PHILIP L. AGNEW (Chairman of the Committee of Management): Your Royal Highness, Ladies and Gentlemen—I feel it a great honour that I am asked to second the vote of thanks to H.R.H. The Duke of Connaught, which has been so gracefully and so eloquently proposed by Sir Alexander Mackenzie. I also cannot possibly compete, and perhaps it is fortunate that I am not called upon on this occasion even to try, but I think my duty to-day is limited to associating myself, as I do most heartily, with everything Sir Alexander has said, particularly in his reference to the very great encouragement we feel—Students, Professors, and Governing Bodies alike—from the continued interest His Royal Highness takes, and has taken for so many years, in all that concerns the work and well-being of the Royal Academy of Music. I can only venture to hope, Sir, that in spite of the absence of music, you have derived as much, or even half as much, pleasure in coming here to-day as we derive from seeing you here. (Loud applause.)

H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT AND STRATHEARN (who was received with loud applause) said: Ladies and Gentlemen, and especially Students of the Royal Academy of Music, I would like to thank Sir Alexander Mackenzie, whom I am so glad to see here to-day—I am sure he recognised the pleasure that it gives everybody that he should be with us—and Mr. Agnew for the very kind manner in which they proposed this vote of thanks for my presiding on this occasion. I can assure you that no vote of thanks is required, because to me it is a personal pleasure to be amongst you to-day, and by my presence to show to all the Students the very great interest I take in the splendid work that is being done by the Royal Academy of Music. I was much amused to hear Sir Alexander Mackenzie say that formerly there was éither no president, or they never saw him. Certainly since I have held the office I have always come, because I take the deepest interest in the Academy, and I congratulate Students and Professors alike on the steady progress that is being annually made in their work. All of you who sit around me here have a career in front of you—I hope a successful one. I know that the competition is terrible, but if you do your utmost and try to excel, then I think you will succeed. It has struck me with great interest, even since last year, that I have met several former pupils of the Royal Academy of Music. I have listened to their singing and playing, and I have derived the greatest pleasure from both. I see the visible signs around me in going about, both in this country and abroad, of the result of the good education, and the good application, of those who have had the great benefit of being educated at the Royal Academy of Music. I think the days have gone when people in this country rather looked down upon music, and did not care for it. It was a mistake, and they have discovered it. Now I suppose there is no country which takes a deeper interest in music or enjoys it more thoroughly, than ours. As we get more and more educated we expect better music, and we certainly get it. It is a great satisfaction that throughout the Empire there is a real love of the Art growing up. I think the rising generation is really fond of music, and everybody knows what a delight it is. One of the greatest pleasures in life is to hear good music, and I do hope that all those who are now in our colleges will go out and will be very successful in their beautiful profession. I deeply regret that this is the second, if not the third, time that the call of duty elsewhere has unfortunately prevented my

remaining during the whole of this prize giving. It is through no fault of mine, but I regret it exceedingly. I should have liked, very much, to have heard the music, and I should like very much to have heard the address of Mr. McEwen. May I congratulate him on the first year of his directorship of the Academy. (Applause.) My time is growing short, but I will now only again repeat the expression of pleasure it has given me to be with you to-day, and assure you of my continued interest in the welfare of the Royal Academy of Music. (Loud applause.)

The Duke of Connaught then left the Hall.

The following selection of music was given by the students :

RECITATION, SOLI, AND FEMALE CHORUS,

from "A Midsummer Night's Dream" *Mendelssohn*

Soloists: ROSE ALPER and JESSIE HEWSON.

EDITH FEHR (RECITATION).

From (a) Act. II., Scene 3, and (b) Act V., Scene 2.

(Accompanist : KATHLEEN V. SUMMERS.)

STRING QUARTET—

"Molly on the Shore" *Percy Grainger*

"Interludium in Modo Antico" *Glazounow*

(From Five Novellettes.)

Strathspey—"Tullochgorum" }
Reel—"Johnny Lad" } *Arr. by John B. McEwen*

JEAN POUGNET (1st Violin). HUGO RIGNOLD (2nd Violin).

LIONEL TERTIS (Viola). DOUGLAS CAMERON ('Cello).

RHINE MAIDENS' TRIO, from "Götterdämmerung" *Wagner*

THE LADIES' CHOIR.

(Accompanist : GUY BARON.)

THE PRINCIPAL, who on rising was received with applause, said : Ladies and Gentlemen—I am an anti-climax after all the exciting emotion, arousing events, and music this afternoon. I appear here to present to you what is called a report on the year's work. In presenting this report, perhaps I may be allowed to refer briefly to the fact that it is thirty-one years since I first attended the Annual Distribution of Prizes of the R.A.M. On that occasion I occupied a seat on the topmost bench of the orchestra seats in the old St. James's Hall. From July, 1898, I sat amongst the Professors, in the company of whom I have since listened to the interesting, instructive, and sometimes entertaining reports presented by my distinguished predecessor. To-day I find myself faced with the task of submitting this Annual Report on the work of the Academy; and you will, I am sure, realise that it is with

very mingled feelings that I stand here, and will extend to me that forbearance and sympathy of which I feel so much need. My task is made easier, however, because I am able to say at the outset that there is no sign that the progressive and successful career of the Royal Academy of Music, which I have witnessed, and in which I am proud to have taken part during these thirty-one years, has been, or is likely to be interrupted. Both in extent and in scope the work of the School continues to grow and increase. The artistic level of our students' work, both individually and collectively, was never higher (Applause), and, apart from mere numbers—which in themselves may well be an embarrassment—the work carried on in the Academy is more important than ever. The public, as well as those immediately interested in the Academy and in its Students, judge mostly of its condition by the standard attained in our Concerts, public and private, and in those functions in which the collective activities of the place can be displayed. So far as this side of our work is concerned, it is hardly my business to express an opinion publicly, but the many appreciative comments of our good friends the Press on our Orchestral Concerts, our Chamber Concerts, our Operatic and Dramatic performances, confirm me in the belief that we have only to maintain the present high standard in order to retain the position which the R.A.M. has so long enjoyed in the confidence and esteem of the country. To those distinguished artists who are immediately responsible for these various Academic activities, and to whom the very high standard of achievement is due, the thanks and tribute of the Academy are extended. Their names are sufficient guarantee that in the future, as in the past, we shall pursue the same ideals of perfection in conception and in execution, and that we shall neither stint effort nor grudge thought in the endeavour to realise these ideals. The Orchestral Class—which is the great nerve-centre of the Institution—continues, under the control and guidance of Sir Henry Wood, to make closer and closer approximation to that perfectly disciplined and perfectly responsive organization which is the ideal orchestra. (Applause.) The special thanks of the Academy—and, in particular, of its Principal—are due to the disinterested and generous affection which has led Sir Henry to associate himself with his old school, and to devote himself with characteristic thoroughness and enthusiasm to the promotion of its interest and well-being. That his efforts are appreciated by those who benefit most from them—the orchestral

students—is obvious; but I should like to assure him that all of us who have the good of the Academy at heart have a proper understanding of the value of the work he has done and is doing. (Applause.)

It is my good fortune that I have taken up my present position at a time when a most important and valuable measure, designed in the interest and for the comfort and well-being of our professorial and clerical staffs, should have been about to mature. Post-war economic conditions have pressed hard on every member of the community, but on none more than on the professional musician, whose income has by no means expanded proportionately to the rise in the cost of living. I understand that, from a legal point of view, the Royal Academy of Music is a *Charity*; and although the lay mind may not be prepared to regard our ordinary and usual activities as included in the ideas usually associated with that term, the Authorities of the School have always administered their great trust on terms which are dictated by considerations other than the purely commercial one of making it pay. The small fees which constitute the students' contribution to the finances of the Institution, are only possible because of the disinterested spirit in which the members of our teaching staff regard their association with the R.A.M. (Applause.) The Staff Superannuation Scheme, which came into being on January 1 last, must therefore be regarded as an attempt on the part of the Academy to balance up its obligations to the distinguished artists and earnest workers whose labours are both its backbone and its life-blood. My ardent hope is that in time the very modest provisions of this too-long-delayed measure may be considerably expanded and amplified.

The number of our students continues to increase. I, personally, do not regard this fact, taken by itself, as indicative of the success of our work. Quality is, in my opinion, a much more important feature of output than quantity. But I mention it because it introduces one of the more serious problems which call for consideration and solution. We have now reached the state of that legendary lady who had so many children that "she didn't know what to do." (Laughter.) Unlike this lady, we know very well what to do, and if only we are allowed to do it we shall be able to make full provision for the upbringing and training of our growing family. An alleviation of our difficulties, and a means of temporarily

relieving our congested condition, will be the new lecture and rehearsal rooms which we are now starting to build behind the Academy. The plans for this scheme have now been finally approved—I accentuate the word finally—by the various Crown Offices concerned, and as we shall start operations at once, we hope to be in possession of this valuable addition to our resources in six or nine months' time. (Applause.) The realisation of this much-needed and long-discussed expansion may possibly bring only a temporary relief, but I may, perhaps, be pardoned if I express the hope that if and when difficulties again become acute, the existence of a large body of enlightened public opinion may justify some future Government—Conservative, Liberal, Labour, Bolshevik (Laughter) or whatever it may be—in formally and officially endorsing the claim of Music for recognition as an important and necessary factor in the life and well-being of the community. (Applause.) Fittingly to celebrate the Centenary of the Academy, a comprehensive, but none too ambitious, building scheme was formulated. If it had been possible to carry it out in a manner and on a scale befitting our needs, and in accordance with our intentions, there is little doubt that most of the material problems in connection with our development might have been finally and definitely solved. Unfortunately, restrictions and limitations, consequent on conflicting interests and authorities, have compelled us to postpone for the present the complete realisation of our plans and our desires, and we have been obliged to rest content with a much more modest compromise, which, although it may relieve our present insistent needs, cannot be regarded either as a wholly satisfactory or as a permanent solution of our difficulties.

It is customary on these occasions to announce publicly the changes in the *personnel* of those officially connected with the Academy. In one respect, which I may perhaps be permitted to regard as an omen of good augury, this announcement differs from that of most of the previous years. Of the names found a year ago amongst the lists of Directors, Committee of Management, Honorary Officers, and Professors, not one has had to be removed from that cause which alone is beyond human control. The late Sir Anderson Critchett, who, as Honorary Oculist to the Academy, placed his great skill and kindly sympathy at the disposal of our Students, resigned a post which he had held for many years, some time before his lamented death in February last. On the other hand, the number

of names which have been added to our official lists is considerable. The Board of Directors has been strengthened by the formal addition of the name of one who, in another capacity, has attended its meetings and furnished advice and guidance in its deliberations for the last thirty-five years. It is a matter for congratulation to all interested in the Academy that Sir Alexander Mackenzie will continue as a Member of the Board of Directors to assist in the deliberations of the "Upper" of the two Houses which watch over the fortunes of our great Institution. (Applause.) If I were to enumerate at length the particular fame and distinction of all the eminent artists, who have joined our teaching staff in the course of the last twelve months, I should not only exhaust my stock of superlatives, but I should leave very little time for other matters to which I must make allusion. So I content myself with saying that in the majority of cases their names emblazoned in gold are already found amongst the records which are the proudest possession of the Academy. I must, however, because of the particular importance of the work with which they are associated, make special reference to two names: Mr. Lionel Tertis is not only an artist of world-wide renown, but he is an old Academy boy. His return to his old School as Director of the Ensemble Classes is therefore an event which is not only of interest to the general musical public, but which is of particular significance to those who, like myself, knew and loved him in those bygone student days. (Applause.) That combination of perceptive musical genius and painstaking and meticulous care which has made him what he is, has already in his new work produced the most notable results. The week of Operatic performances at the New Scala Theatre which took place with brilliant success not only served to exhibit the talent, industry, and versatility of those students who took part in the presentation of those two contrasted Master Works—"The Magic Flute," by Mozart, and "Falstaff," by Verdi—but offered striking testimony to the patience, skill, and resource of him to whom this success was chiefly due—Mr. Julius Harrison. (Loud applause.) The accession to the Academy Staff of Mr. Harrison brings amongst us one who unites in a peculiar degree high artistic gifts and insight with qualities—not always associated with the artistic temperament—which are essential and valuable in steadying and controlling the inevitable instabilities of an Operatic Class. (Laughter.)

I pass on now to matters which will more particularly interest those of my hearers who are seated behind me and in the immediate neighbourhood. I should like to say, in the first place, that when I took office twelve months ago, one of the things that created in my mind some small amount of uncertainty, if not a feeling of apprehension, was that I was in some little doubt as to how the students would treat me. (Laughter.) I may say at once that they have been kindness and consideration itself. Making allowance for an occasional exhibition of those high spirits which are the characteristic and privilege of youth, and which I myself have not altogether forgotten (Laughter), nothing has happened to make me think that they regard me otherwise than as a harmless, if necessary, factor in the economy of the School. (Laughter.) For my part, the kindly feeling and sympathy with which I have always regarded young people still remain unchanged, or, if changed, are only mellowed by an extra tinge of solicitude when I think of my new responsibilities. To have a family of nine hundred boys and girls is a very heavy weight of responsibility. During the last few weeks the realisation of these responsibilities has been considerably increased, because I found not very long ago that I was expected to know all the nine hundred of them well enough to pick out, without error or hesitation, the most distinguished, the most deserving, the most industrious, and those excelling in a host of other major and minor virtues. Amongst the many awards and honours by which this afternoon these virtues have been recognised, there are *two* which merit special mention—because, whatever may happen in actual practice, in theory, at least, the responsibility of choosing the recipients rests on the shoulders of the Principal. This year sees the periodic return to the Academy of an Award which we share with our friends the Royal College of Music and the Guildhall School of Music. I refer to the Medal presented to the most distinguished Student in the Academy by the Worshipful Company of Musicians. We have many Students who are distinguished in the Academy, and the task of selection might well have been a very difficult one. But, when a young artist has gone through the course of study in the School with brilliant success; when he has accumulated a host of prizes and awards; when he has been associated in an especial and deservedly prominent way with the collective work of the School, by which we display to the public the live condition of things inside our walls; when in addition to all this he has shown diligence, assiduity, and manliness which

have been a delight to his teachers and an example to his fellow students, his distinction inside the Academy is of a very high order indeed. To me, who have known Mr. Roy Henderson (Loud applause), in the intimate way in which a teacher can know a pupil, it was no surprise that when opportunity came along—as still it sometimes does—he should prove equal to it; and at a concert of the Royal Philharmonic Society, by a superlatively fine performance of an intricate and difficult work, while still a Student, splendidly uphold the credit of the old School and definitely establish his artistic reputation. (Loud applause.) The other of these two prizes, the Dove Prize, is given, according to the Trust, for “general excellence, assiduity, and industry.” It is, therefore, also a prize for distinction in the Academy. But I read into the conditions laid down in the deed an intention in the mind of the generous testator which accords well with my own instinct in the matter. If I had to rely only on what we regard as distinction in the narrow sense of the word, my choice would have been difficult and uncertain. But the three major virtues catalogued in the trust deed imply to me the possession of one quality which does not always go with mere talent or technical brilliance. I regard this prize as the reward not of talent alone, but of talent which has been ever at the service of the Academy; of an assiduity and of an industry which are displayed not solely for selfish ends, but which are used for the general good of the community inside the walls of the School. I therefore regard Miss Doris Sheppard as a worthy recipient of this valuable prize (Loud applause), and I am happy to see that you emphatically endorse my opinion.

I have now come to the end of my Report. Not that I have exhausted my topics, or even broached the thousand and one things which I might have dealt with had time and your kind patience allowed. With a final word I close. Looking back over the last year and surveying and appraising the work which you have done in the session which has just come to an end, I cannot but feel that we are justified, both you and I, in looking forward with confidence and hope to the future. The high level of excellence which has been displayed in your individual performances at our Concerts and Rehearsals is not only a witness of your diligence and ability, but is an earnest and an assurance of the future. The admirable spirit which has inspired your collective activities is, in each case, derived from the self-

sacrificing example and stimulating precepts of your teachers; but your response to these, exhibited in the work of the Orchestral, Ensemble, Operatic, and Dramatic Classes, has been a never-failing delight and encouragement to me in my own work. During the year just closed you have attained to and established a record which, so far as my knowledge of the School is concerned, has never been surpassed. It will be your duty and mine to see that there is no recession from this standard; but that, on the contrary, we continually enlarge its scope and improve its excellence. Although, strictly speaking, the term has one more day to run, for most of you this is the end of the Academic year, and you leave this Hall this day with your minds directed to a different sort of life from that which you have led during the last nine months. After work, arduous even if it is enjoyable, you go to well-earned rest and recreation; and you carry with you the good wishes of your Professors and my humble self for all the good things which are associated with the idea of holiday. Many—most of you—look forward to returning to the Academy in two months' time. I know that the Academy is a place you leave with regret and to which you return with zest and pleasure. I need hardly say that we shall welcome you back refreshed and re-invigorated, to pursue with fresh energy and interest your own particular studies, and to mingle still further in that stream of enthusiastic and visionary young life which flows through the School. Some of you, having now completed your studentship, will each in his or her own sphere take up the duties and responsibilities of professional life. You will find, as your elders have found, that the further your student days recede from you, the more your hearts will warm to the old School and its associations. By joining the R.A.M. Club you will be able to keep in touch both with us who remain to carry on, and with those who have been your fellow Students. We shall not forget you, and you cannot forget your Alma Mater. Ever she will keep open door for her children. In her, and in her continued work and life, they find not only resources from which they can derive fresh strength for the conflict, but an inspiration kept alive and active through those high ideals which she has ever held up for your example and encouragement. (Loud applause.)

The National Anthem was then sung, and the proceedings terminated.

